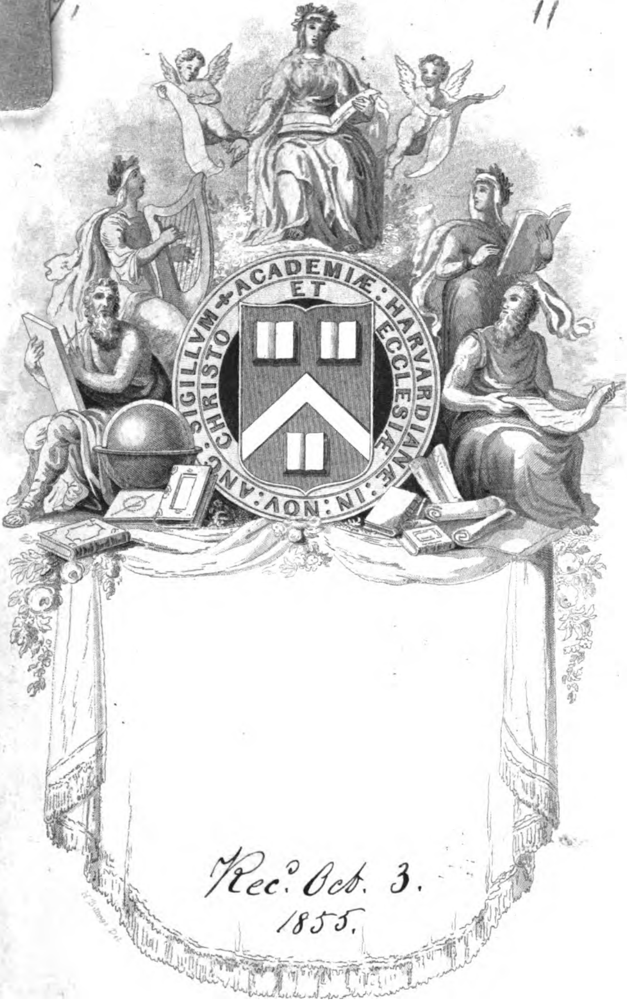

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H. Cole

NUGÆ POETICÆ.

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Nugæ Poeticæ.

SELECT PIECES

OF

OLD ENGLISH POPULAR POETRY,

ILLUSTRATING

THE MANNERS AND ARTS

OF THE

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

EDITED BY

JAMES ORCHARD HALLIWELL, Esq. F.R.S.

Hon. M R. I. A., Hon. M. R. S. L., F. S. A., &c.

LONDON:

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1844.

To

THOMAS JOSEPH PETTIGREW, Esq.

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS

INSCRIBED

AS A

SLIGHT TESTIMONY OF ESTEEM.

PREFACE.

The investigators of the history of past times almost always find that the remains of popular literature are of less common occurrence and more difficult to meet with than those of a more solid character. Ballads, squibs, satires, and short poems of a similar description, which were probably in the hands of thousands some three or four centuries since, are now either altogether lost, or perhaps exist only in a few manuscripts, often inaccessible even to those who would study what has been happily denominated the *history of the people*. The indications of national characters, and the illustrations of the manners of our ancestors, which such pieces almost invariably afford, often render them extremely valuable, much more so than their intrinsic merit would generally warrant. They are likewise important in a philological point of view; but what has been preserved for our day has been so diligently sought after and published by Ritson and others, that it has really now become a very

difficult matter to discover any worth printing not already included in their publications.

Perhaps, therefore, the present addition to similar collections already before the public may not be considered unacceptable to the literary antiquary. I would particularly direct the reader's attention to the old fabliau entitled the "Debate of the Carpenter's Tools," which is perhaps one of the most curious of the kind known to exist, and it is somewhat remarkable that it should have slumbered so long unnoticed in a volume that has been extensively used by Conybeare and other editors. It was probably translated from the French, pieces of that class being much more common in Anglo-Norman, and original compositions in English of so early a date being of somewhat rare occurrence. The first poem, Colyn Blowbol's Testament, is a composition of considerable humour, though rather broad occasionally in some of its expressions, and from its style may be adjudged with more probability to be a genuine and original example of early English satirical poetry. The other pieces which comprise the contents of this little volume

call for little in the way of particular remark beyond what will be found in the notes, and may be dismissed with the observation that it is believed most of them will be found worthy of preservation, though not perhaps of so inviting a character as the two just mentioned. It is only necessary to say in conclusion that our selection has been formed from manuscripts preserved in the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, the Ashmolean Museum, the Public Library of the University of Cambridge, and the library of Lincoln Cathedral, repositories widely distant from each other, and for the most part not always readily accessible to students.

J. O. H.

GHISTLIPE,

21st Oct. 1844.

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COLYN BLOWBOL'S TESTAMENT.

Here foloweth Colyn Blowbols Testament.

Whan that Bachus, the myghti lorde,
And Juno eke, both by one accorde,
Had sette a-broche of myghti wyne a tone,
And afterwardys into the brayn ran
Of Colyn Blobolle, whan he had dronke ataunt
Both of Teynt and of wyne Alycaunt,
Till he was drounke as any swyne;
And after this, with a mery chere,
He rensyd had many an ale picher,
That he began to loken and to stare,
Like a wode bole or a wilde mare;
So toty was the brayn of his hede,
That he desirid for to go to bede,
And whan he was ones therin laide,
With hymself mervailously he fraide;
He gan to walow and turn up and downe,
And for to tell in conclucioun,
Sore he spwed, and alle up he kest
That he had recevyd in his brest,
So that it was grete pité for to here
His lamentacion and his hevy chere.
An hors wold wepe to se the sorow he maide,
His evy countenaunces and his colour fade.
I trow he was infecte certeyn
With the faitour, or the fever lordeyn,
Or with a sekenesse called a knave ateynt;
And anon his herte he gan to faynt,
And afterward their toke hym many a throw
Of good ale bolys that he had i-blowe;

He lokyd furyous as a wyld catt,
And pale of hew like a drowned ratte.
And in his bake their toke hym one so fell,
That afterward folowed a very stynkyng semell,
That for to cast wos more unwholsom
Than *aurum potable* or *aurum pimentum.*
And whan his angwyssh somwhat gan apese,
He recovered of his dronken dessese,
He set hym up and sawe their biside
A sad man, in whom is no pride,
Right a discrete confessour, as I trow,
His name was called sir John Doclow;
He had commensed in many a worthier place
Then ever was Padow, or Boleyn de Grace;
Of so grete reverens werre the universites,
That men toke entrie knelyng on their kenes;
In suche places his fader for hym had ben,
Whate shuld I tell you? ye wotte where I mene.
And yet in phisike he cowth no skyl at all,
Whiche men callen baas naturall;
Good drynke he lovyd better than he did wepit,
Men called hym maister John-with-the-shorte-tipet.
Hereby men may well understonde and see,
That in scolys he had take degré,
And was well laboured in the rough byble,
For he loved in no wise to be idele;
An able man to be aboute a pope,
Because he coude a conscience so well grope,
And make an man to bryng oute his mynde
Every thing that he had left behynde.
He gaf me many a good certacion,
With right and holsom predicacion,
That he had laboured in Venus secrete cell,
And me exponyd many a good gossepell,
And many a right swete epistell eke,
In hem perfite and not for to seke;

And he had them i-lerneid and i-rade,
And all were good, I trow their were none bade.
And right like an hevynly instrument
Unto me ever his tounge wente,
It was joie for to here and see
The fructuous talkyng that he had to me;
He behavyd hym so lich a gostly leche,
Both in countenaunce and in his speche,
And bad I shuld, bycause I was seke,
Unto Lucina and to Ciraa eke
My soule byqueth or I hens deperte,
As I wold have his prayers afterward.
He promysyd me also that he wold syng
Foure devoite masses at my biryng,
On of Bachus, anothir of Lucina,
The third of Juno, the fourth of Ciria,
And at Venus temple with grett devocion,
I have to you so grette dilection,
And for my soule ryng many a mery pele
In Venus temple and eke in hir chapell,
And also in many anothir holy stede,
Where Spado may not helpe women at ther nede;
And bad me eke be of right good chere
Alle the wyle I shold abyde here,
And for any thing that he coude feele
That was in me, I sholde do right wele.
And yet he said, "Be myne avisement,
Withoute tarying ye make your Testament,
And by good avice alle thing well besett,
Loke ye do soo, for ye shall fare the bett;
Whylis ye have your right memorie,
Calle unto you your owne secretory,
Maister Grombold, that can handell a pen,
For on booke he skrapith like an hen,
That no man may his letters know nor se,
Allethough he looke trugh spectacles thre.

Let such a man writte your Testament,
For he shall best folow your entent."

In Bachus Nomine, Amen!

"I Colyn Blobol, all thinges to fulfill,
Wol that this be my last welle:
First, I bequeth my goost that is bareyn,
Whan it is depertid from the careyn,
Unto the godesse called Lucina,
And to hir sustir called Ciria;
For Lucina hath the governale
Of the salt flodes, wher many a ship doith saile,
And oftentymes ther they gone to wrake;
That causeth the stormes and the wawes blake;
And Ciria eke, as Fulgens tellys,
Abideth moste in flodis and spring wellys.
And for because I have sette my plesaunce
In plenté of drynke, I shall have in penaunce
To dwell in wayters, as for a purgatory,
Whan I deperte from this world transetory,
Unto the tyme that Dyane of hir grace
List ordeyn me another dwellyng place;
But every sin must have his purgacion
Here or in annothir habitacion.
And for the swete wynes that arn so myghti,
In whom I have sette all my glorie,
Therfor of right it must nedis be thus,
My soule to dwell in waters troublous,
That ben salt and bitter for to taste,
And them to take as for my repaste;
For of right, and as old bookes doon trete,
Sharp sawce was ordeigned for swete mete.
And I bequeth also my wrecchid cors,
Whiche of the soule gafe litell fors,
In the temple of Bachus to have his sepulture,
That alwey hath done his best cure,

To serve hym best with all his hole entent,
Erly and late and ay right diligent;
The cause why I shall to you devyne,
For Bichus is called the god of wyne;
And for that licour is so presious,
That oft hath made [me] dronke as any mous,
Therfor I will that ther it beryd be
My wrecchid body afore this god pardé,
Mighti Bachus that is myn owen lorde,
Without variaunce to serve hym or discorde."
And after that another throw hym toke,
And therwihtalle his body alle to-shooke,
Lyke as a fever that bernned hym so hote,
And was to hym grete payne I wote;
And other whiles such a farte he lete,
That men wend verely he had shete;
Ther ys no storme ne tempest ay doth lest;
But also sone as his anwhushe was past,
He procedid to performe his will:
"I byqueth, as it was right and skyll,
Unto the abbasse of this monestary,
I mene of Bachus, that myghti lorde in glorie;
Alas Sloth, that devoute woman,
Whiche hath the propreté of a swan,
Evyr to be in plenté of licour,
And in the morenyng by viij. was his houre
To be as dronke as any swyne,
With wyne, or ale, or sum licour devyne,
And to her sustres of that condicioun,
Wheir ever they dwell, in citie or in towne,
Alle the londys and passessions
That I have lying within the bowns
Of Southwerke and of the stwes syde,
As wynde-melles ande water-milles eke,
With alle their purtenaunces lying on every syde,
That be there redy and ar not for to seke,

Sufficient i-nough, yf they were all told,
For to serve many a grete houshold,
By a charter to have and to hold,
Under my seale of lede made the mold,
And writen in the skyne of swyne,
What that it is made in parchemyn,
Because it shuld perpetually endure,
And unto them be both stable and sure,
Sauf only a certeyn quyte-rent,
Which that I have gevyn with good entent
To pay for me, unto my confessour,
That called is a man of grette honoure,
At the stewes side and their fast by,
To have an hous and dwell therin yerly;
And to be paid of penaunce ten or twelve,
As good livers as he is hymselfe,
To fete it their whan he hath nede therto,
It is my will right evyn that it be so;
And of this rent, yf that he doith faile,
I gyve hym powre to skore on the tale,
And take an stresse, yf that nede be,
Upon the grounde, one, two, or thre,
And with hym home his stressis for to cary,
And in his chamber to make them for to tary,
Till he be paid fully of the quyte-rent,
And wel i-plesid after hys owyn entent.
And at his forsaid charter maykyng,
And also at the possession takyng,
Alle good drynkers that any where may be hade,
With braynles people and other that ben made,
Shuld be at doing of this dede;
The blissing of Bachus I graunte hym to mede,
To be wittness of this cha[r]ter sealyng.
Because I wold they shold for nothing
Be interupt of their possessouns,
That I have gyve them lying in the bouns

Of Southewerke and of the stweys syde,
But evermore with them to abyde;
To make them have the mor devocion
For me to say many an orison,
On nightes specially whan other men do wy[n]ke,
Bycause I sette my plesaunce in good drynke.
And I byqueth unto my secrytory,
Regestered a brother in the order of foly,
For his labour and his diligence,
Six marke of bruce to have for his dispence,
To this entent, that he bistow it shall
Upon good drynk, and on no mete at all;
My custom ever hath ben to doo soo,
It is my will that he shuld the same [doo].
And I bequeth, yef that I dey shall,
For to hold my fest funeral,
An hundreth marke of pruce money fyne,
For to bistow upon bred and wyne,
With other drynkys that dilicious be,
Whiche in ordre herafter ye shall se.
And for to be at this fest funerall,
I will have called in generalle
Alle tho that ben very good drynkers,
And eke also alle feoble swyvers,
And they also that can lyft a bole,
Till that the drynke hath take them by the polle;
And they also that ben dronkyn wyce,
And othir that arn dronken fooles nyce;
And many dronken people shalbe there,
And none of these may fayle at this dyner.
And for to s[o]moun all them to this fest,
The baily of Roston therto is the beste;
Sauf I will have after myn owyn entent,
An hous for them, that is convenient,
And it shalbe Didalus is hous.
And every man shalbe as drownke as any mous,

Or any of them from this fest passe.
And for to tell how this hows maide was,
Ther werre therto sevynty and sevin
Of dores in nombre, as poets doo nevin,
And he that was ones entered in,
Coude fynde no wey out for to wyn,
Till that he com ynto a gardeyn,
And their he shuld fynd in certeyn
A clew of yern, and therto he must wynd,
And therof take a thred by the ende,
And make a knot about hys fynger withall,
And with the thred wynd hym oute he shall,
But otherwise myght no man oute wyne,
After that he was ones entered in.
And for because so many dores be
Unto this hous, and so fer entré,
Me thingith therfore, as by my jugement,
This is a hous for them most convenient.
But whan all folk ones be entrid in,
I will these people the high borde begyn,
Tho specially that arn dronken wise,
People most able, after myne avise,
To sett their among all other thing
To make them wise in ther owyn talkyng,
And wenith thir wittes be beyonde the mone,
And medle of thynges that they have nought to done,
And deme themself as wise, withoute lees,
As ever was Aristole, Plato, or Socrates ;
And their thinges begyne to lye,
For than they ben as dronke-lyight as a flye,
And will tell of thinges that have be done,
Whereas never shyneth sone ne mone,
I will therfor for myn honesty,
At the hy dees thes people sette be.
And to begin also the secounde table,
I will ther be honest men and able,

Such as wilbe as drongen as a nape,
And they will skoff now and jape,
And be also as full of nyces toyes,
As ben yong childern or elis wantown boyes;
And they whiche also both gape and gren,
Like the ars of a squirtyng hen.
And in suche caas often tymes they be,
That one may make them play with strawes thre,
And be as nyce in a mannys hous,
As is a catt playing with a mous,
Therfor I will this people sett there,
A place ther is for them elleswhere.
The thirde table shal begyne as tyte,
They that be manly in dronkenesse for to fyte,
Whan one ther hede is sett a barly-hate,
Than arn they as manly as a ganat,
And than they will kyll every fle and lous,
And in ther way bydith nodir ratte ne mous;
They will kyll in that grete hete
Huge Golyas, with their wordis grete,
And also the grete Gogmagog,
Cresced worme and the water frog.
Than they begyn to swere and to stare,
And be as braynles as a Marshe hare,
When they have one their habergon of malt,
They wene to make many a man to halt,
For they be than so angry and so wraw,
And yet they will stombile at a straw.
And every table shall fulfilled be,
Men of worship and men of honesté;
After that they shalbe servyd wele,
Bute of drynke and mete never a dele.
And will their be supervysours,
With officers, as conyng surveyours,
Bakers, bruers, and buttelers of the best,
Tene them of brede and drynke ere they rest,

Till every man have plenté and sufficiaunce,
Of mete and drynk right large abundaunce;
Som to serve and some for to sew
Them brede and drynke, as they sit a-raw;
And what with gestes and with servauntes eke,
I trow their shalbe an honeste felowship.
Sauf first of ale they shall have new bake bonns,
With stronge ale bruen in fattes and in tonnes,
Pyng, Drangoll, and the Braget fyne,
Methe, Mathebru, and Mathelynge,
Rede wyn, the claret, and the white,
With Teynt and Alycaunt, in whom I delite;
Wyn ryvers and wyn sake also,
Wyne of Langdoke and of Orliaunce therto,
Sengle bere, and othir that is dwobile,
Which causith the brayn of man to trouble;
Spruce beer, and the beer of Hambur,
Whiche makyth oft tymes men to stambur;
Malmasyes, Tires, and Rumneys,
With Caperikis, Campletes, and Osneys,
Verunge, Cute, and Raspays also,
Whippett and Pyngmedo, that ben lawyers therto;
And I will have also wyne de Ryne,
With new maid Clarye, that is good and fyne,
Muscadell, Terantyne, and Bastard,
With Ypocras and Pyment comyng afterwarde.
And as for mete I will that goo quyte,
For I had never therin grete dylite,
So that I myȝt have drynke at my will,
Good ale or wyne my bely for to fille.
Also I will eke that John Aly,
And his brother Laurens Sty,
Be surveyours cheyff at this dynere,
And serve oute drynkes that ben both brith and cleyre,
And se that every man have sufficiaunce

Of all drynkys, plenté and abundaunce.
Also I will that other men ther be
To serve the people everiche in degree,
That is to say, Robert Otwey,
Nicholas Inglond and Robert Horsley,
And Colin Bloboll and Robert Curé;
And to gadre in the cuppys grett and smale,
Their shall be muster William Copyndale,
And othir such they ben to fwe,
Theym for to serve and their dishes to sew.
And to se all thinges truly doone
After my deth, dwely and right sone,
I ordeyn to be myn executour
Of my last will, with a supervisour,
Aleyn Maltson, to se truly
My will performyd wele and duly,
As I have ordeynd here after myn entent,
By good avicement in my Testament.
And I will that supervisour bee
Over hym a man of honesté,
Sybour Groutehed, a man full discrette,
Whiche wilbe dronke with myghti wynes swete,
Thaugh he non drynk but semell ones therto,
I hold hym mekly therfor to have adoo,
In suche a mater of so grete a charge.
And for their labour I reward them large,
For myn executour shall have xx^ti. marke,
And to my supervisour, for his besy warke,
And his labour and his diligence,
He shall have yerely viij. marke for his dispence.
Thus I Colyn Blowboll, with good avisement,
Make an end now of my Testament,
And willyng every man in his degree,
For me to pay unto the peyté
Of mighti Bachus, and of myghti Juno,
When I hens weynd, that I may com them too;

Whiche have ever be right diligent
To serve them best, with all myn hole entent,
And so shall I doo unto my lyves ende,
So pray for me that I may to them wynde,
Whan Antropus shall twyn a-two the thirde;
And or that tyme no man shalbe dede,
Of the mevyng of my mortall body,
That I may then entre into their glorie.
And me remember with your devocion,
Hertely with all your mencion,
With som good prayres whan ye upon me thynke,
Whiche hath ben ever a lover of goode drynke."

Thow litell quayer, how darst thow shew thy face,
Or com yn presence of men of honesté?
Sith thow ard rude and folowist not the trace
Of faire langage, nor haiste no bewté;
Wherefore of wysedom thus I councell the,
To draw the bake fer out of their sight,
Lest thow be had in reproef and dispite!

Here endyth Colyn Blobollys Testament.

THE

DEBATE OF THE CARPENTER'S TOOLS.

[From MS. Ashmol. 61, fol. 23-26.]

The shype ax seyd unto the wryght,
"Mete and drynke I schall the plyght,
Clene hose and clene schone,
Gete them wer as ever thou kane;
Bot fore all that ever thou kane,
Thall (?) never be thryfty man,
Ne none that longes the craft unto,
Fore no thyng that thou kane do."
"Wherefore," seyd the belte,
"With grete strokes I schalle hym pelte;
My mayster schall full welle thene,
Both to clothe [and] fede his men."
"ȝe, ȝe," seyd the twybylle,
"Thou spekes ever ageyne skylle.
I-wys, i-wys, it wylle not bene,
Ne never I thinke that he wylle thene."
"ȝis, ȝis," seyd the wymbylle,
"I ame als rounde as a thymbyll;
My maysters werke I wylle remembyre,
I schall crepe fast into the tymbyre,
And help my mayster within a stounde
To store his cofere with xx. pounde."
"ȝe, ȝe," seyd tho compas,
"Thou arte a fole in that case,
For thou spekes without vysment,
Therefore thou getyst not thi entent;
Wyte thou wele it schall be so,
That lyghtly cum schall lyghtly go:
And thou gete more than other fyve,

ʒit schall thi mayster never thryve."
The groping-iren than spake he,
"Compas, who hath grevyd the?
My mayster ʒit may thryve fulle wele,
How he schall I wylle the telle;
I ame his servant trew and gode,
I suere the, compas, by the Rode,
Wyrke I schalle bothe nyght and dey,
To gete hym gode I schall assey."
"ʒe, ʒe," seyd the saw,
"It is bote bost that thou doyst blow,
Fore thofe thou wyrke bothe dey [and] nyght,
He wyll not the, I sey the ryght;
He wones to nyʒe the ale-wyffe,
And he thouht ever fore to thryffe."
Than seyd the whetstone,
"Thoff my mayster thryft be gone,
I schall hym helpe within this ʒere
To gete hym xx.ti merke clere;
Hys axes schall I make fulle scharpe,
That thei may lyʒhtly do ther werke;
To make my master a ryche man
I schall asey, if that I canne."
To hym than seyd the adys,
And seyd, "ʒe, ser, god glades,
To speke of thryfft it wyll not be,
Ne never I thinke that he schall the,
Fore he wyll drynke more on a dey
Than thou cane lyghtly arne in twey;
Therefore thi tonge I rede thou hold,
And speke no more no wordes so bold."
To the adys than seyd the fyle,
"Thou schuldes not thi mayster revyle,
Fore thoff he be unhappy,
ʒit fore his thryft thou schuldes se;
Fore I thinke or tomorow at none
To arne my mayster a payre of schone;

Fore I schalle rube, with all my myght,
My mayster tolys for to dyght,
So that, within a lytell space,
My mayster purce I schall encrece."
Than seyd the chesyll,
"And ever he thryve, he berys hym wele;
Fore tho thou rube to thi hede ake,
His thryfte fro hym it wyll be take;
Fore he loves gode ale so wele,
That he therfore his hod wyll selle;
Fore some dey he wyll vij.d drynke:
How he schall thryve I canne not thinke."
"ȝe, ȝe," seyd the lyne and the chalke,
"My mayster is lyke to many folke;
Tho he lufe ale never so wele,
To thryv and the I schall hym telle;
I schall merke well upone the wode,
And kepe his mesures trew and gode,
And so, by my mesures all,
To the full wele my mayster schall."
Than bespake the prykyng-knyfe,
"He duellys to nyȝe the ale-wyfe;
Sche makes oft tyme his purse full thynne,
No peny some tyme sche levys therin:
Tho thou gete more than other thre,
Thryfty man he canne not be."
"ȝe, ȝe," seyd the persore,
"That at I sey it shall be sure;
Whi chyd ȝe iche one with other?
Wote ȝe wele I ame ȝour brother!
Therefore none contrary me,
Fore as I sey so schall it be:
My mayster ȝit schall be full ryche;
Als fere as I may stret and streche,
I wyll helpe with all my myght,
Both by dey and by nyght,
Fast to runne into the wode,

And byte I schall with moth full gode,
And thus I trowe be my crowne,
To make hym schyreff of the toune."
"Soft, ser," seyd the skantyllȝon,
"I trow ȝour thryft be wele ny done;
Ever to crewyll thou arte in word,
And ȝet thou arte not worth a tord:
Fore all the gode that thou gete myght,
He wyll spend it on a nyght."
Than the crow byganne to speke,
Fore-why is herte was lyke to breke
To here his brother so revyld,
And seyd, "thou spekes lyke a chyld!
Tho my mayster spend never so faste,
I-nouȝe he schall have at the laste,
May forteyn as mych as ever shall he,
That drynke never peny to that he dyȝe."
"Ȝe, ȝe," seyd the rewle,
"I feyth thou arte bot a fole,
Fore and he dyȝe and have ryght nouȝht,
Who trowys thou wyll gyfe hym owght?
Thus schall he ly upone the grownd,
And be beryed lyke an hund:
Fore and a man have ought before,
When he has nede it is gode store."
"What, ser reule," seyd the pleyn,
"Another resone I wyll the seyne;
Thoff my mayster have no happe,
Ȝit thi mayster thou schudyst not lake;
Fore ȝit a mene I schall se,
That my mayster schall wele the:
I schalle hym helpe, both dey and nyght,
To gete hym gode with all my myght;
I schalle clens on every syde
To helpe my mayster in his pride."
The brode ax seyd withouten mysse,
He seyd, "the pleyn my brother is;

We two schall clence and make full pleyne,
That no man schall us geyne-seyne,
And gete oure mayster in a ȝere
More sylver than a man may bere."
"Ȝe, ȝe," seyd the twyvete,
"Thryft I trow be fro ȝour fette,
To kepe my mayster in his pride;
In the contré ȝe canne not byde,
Without ȝe stele and be thefys,
And put meny mene to greffys;
Fore he wylle drynke more in a houre
Than two men may gete in fowre.
When ȝe have wrouȝht alle that ȝe canne,
Ȝit schalle he never be thryfty mane."
Than be-spake the polyff,
With gret strong wordes and styffe,
"How, ser twyvel, me thinke ȝou grevyd!
What devylle who hath ȝou thus mevyd?
Thof he spend more in a ȝere
Off gold and sylver than thou may bere,
I schall hym helpe with all my myght;
I trow to make hym ȝet a knyght!"
"What, ser," seyd the wyndas rewle,
"Me thynke thou arte bot a fole,
Fore thou spekes oute of sesone,
He may not the therfore by resone;
A carpenter to be a knyght,
That was ever ageyne ryght;
Therefore I schall telle the a saw,
Who so wold be hyȝe he schall be law."
"Ȝe," than seyd the rewle-stone,
"Mayster hath many fone;
And ȝe wold helpe at his nede,
My mayster schuld the better spede,
Bot whatsoever ȝe brage our boste,
My mayster ȝet shall reule the roste;
Fore as I ame a trew mane,

I schalle hym helpe all that I canne."
The gowge seyd, "The devyles dyrte
Fore anything that thou canne wyrke!
Fore all that ever thou canne do,
It is not worthe an old scho!
Thow hast be prentys this vij. ȝere,
And ȝit thy crafte is for to lere;
And thou couthe wyrke als wele as he,
Ȝet schall thi mayster never the."
"Softe, ser," seyd the gabulle-rope,
"Methinke gode ale is in ȝour tope,
Fore thou spekes as thou wold fyght,
Thereto and thou hade any myght;
I schall telle the another tale,
My mayster how I schall aveyle;
Hayle and pulle I schall fulle faste
To reyse housys, whyle I may laste,
And so, within a lytell throw,
My mayster gode schall not be know."
Than spake the wryghtes wyfe,
"Nother of ȝou schall never thryfe,
Nother the mayster, ne the manne,
Fore nothinge that ȝe do canne,
Fore ȝe wyll spend in a moneth
More gode than iij. men hath."
The squyre seyd, "what sey ȝe, dame?
Ȝe schuld not speke my mayster schame!"
"Squyre, I have non other cause,
I suere the by Seynt Eustase!
Fore alle the ȝerne that I may spynne,
To spend at ale he thinkes no synne!
He wylle spend more in an owre,
Than thou and I canne gete in fowre!"
"Ȝit me thinke ȝe be to blame
To gyffe my mayster syche a name,
Fore thoff he spend more than ȝe have,
Ȝit his worschype ȝe schuld save."

"Mary I schrew hym and the to,
And alle them that so canne do!
Fore hys servaunt I trow thou be,
There thou schalle never the;
Fore and thou lerne that craft at hym,
Thy thryft I trow schall be fulle thine!"
The draught-nayle than spake he,
And seyd, "Arme, that is no le,
Ȝe hafe the maner of this frekes,
That thus fore my mayster spekes;
Bot lythe to me a lytelle space,
I schall ȝow telle all the case
How that they wyrke fore ther gode,
I wylle not lye be the rode!
When thei have wroght an oure ore two,
Anone to the ale thei wylle go,
And drinke ther whyle thei may dre,
Thou to me and *I to the.*"
And seys the ax schall pay fore this,
Therefore the cope ons I wylle kys;
And when thei comme to werke ageyne,
The belte to hys mayster wyll seyne,
"Mayster, wyrke no oute off resone,
The dey is vary long of seson;
Smale strokes late us hake,
And sumtyme late us es oure bake;
The wymbulle spekes lyke a syre,
Sevyne pens off a dey is smale hyre
Fore wryghtes that wyrke so faste,
And in owre werke have grete haste."
The groping iren says full sone,
"Mayster, wylle ȝe wele done,
Late us not wyrke to we suete,
Fore cachyng of over gret hete.
For we may after cold to take,
Than on stroke may we no hake.
Than be-spake the whetstone,

And seyd, Mayster, we wylle go home,
Fore fast it draw unto the nyght,
Our soper by this I wote is dyght;
The lyne and stone, the persere and fyle,
Seys that is a gode counesylle;
The crow, the pleyn, and the squyre,
Seys we have arnyd wele our hyre;
And thus with fraudes and falsyd,
Is many trew man deseyvid;
Therefore by ought that I canne se,
They schall never thryve ne the;
Therefore the craft I wylle go froo,
And to another wylle I goo."
Then ansuered the wyfe in hye,
" And I myght so wold I,
Bot I ame to hym bounde so faste,
That of my halter I may not caste;
Therefore the preste that bounde me prentys,
He schall treuly have my curse,
And ever schall have to that I dyȝe,
In what contré that ever he be!"
Therefore, wryȝtes, take hede of this,
That ȝe may mend that is amysse,
And treuly that ȝe do ȝour labore,
Fore that wylle be to ȝour honour;
And greve ȝou nothing at this song,
Bot ever make mery yourselve amonge!
Ne ȝet at hym that it dud make,
Ne envy at hym ȝe take,
Ne none of ȝou do hym blame,
Fore-why the craft hath do hym schame,
By mo weys than two ore thre.
Thus seys the boke serteynlye,
God, that is both gode and hend,
Gyff ȝou grace that ȝe may mend,
And bryng us alle unto his blysse,
That never fro us schall mysse!

THE MERCHANT AND HIS SON.

[From MS. Bib. Publ. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38.]

Here foloweth a gode mater of the marchand and hys sone.

Lystenyth, ye godely gentylmen, and all that ben hereyn,
Of a ryche franklyn of Ynglond a song y wyll begyn;
Many yewels and grete tresure, bothe of sylver and golde,
Hors and nete he had grete plenté, and many a shyp in folde,
He had gold and sylver y-nogh leyde up in hys cofur,
Yf hys neȝbur had never so grete nede, he wold hym none profur;
He was a grete tenement man, and ryche of londe and lede,
Ȝyt wolde he never in all hys lyfe do no maner almesdede;
Yf ony pore man came to hys place, eyther erly or late,
He schuld have neyther mete nor drynke, thoȝ he dyed ther ate.
Yf hys pore neghbur had nede to sylver, he wold hym non lenne,
But yf he grauntyd to pay hym ageyn for ix. *s.* x.
By a gode oblygacion bounde, in cas he faylyd hys day,
He schulde dowbyll hyt every peny, he shuld not sey hym nay;
He wold ellys prison them full sore, and do them mekyl care,

He had never no compascion of hys pore neȝburs fare.
And he myȝt fynde hys neȝburs beste, eyther in corne or grasse,
He myȝt as wele gyf hym hys beste, as pay for hys trespas;
For and a beste come in hys londe, berley, pese, or whete,
He wolde have a quarter of corne, thowe the beste toke but oon bytt.
Yf any man boght of hys chaffere, yn case he had nede to borowe,
He schulde pay the derrer for the loone, thus dydd he moche sorowe!
Hym selfe wolde pay no man for dett, neythyr for olde ne newe,
But what he caght full faste he helde, soch balys dudd he brewe.
Thys ryche man he had a wyfe, a semely woman and a feyre,
God sende a chylde betwene them two, the whych schulde be ther heyre:
Thys chylde was borne to Holy Churche, with mekyll yoye and game,
There was he crystenyd veryly, and callyd Wyllyam hys name.
In tyme of age he wente to scole, that curtes ys and hende,
He cowde hys gramer wonder wele, hys felows cowde hym not amende;
He was bothe meke and mylde, as a gode chylde owyth to bee;
Whan he was comen to hys age, a godely man was hee,
And welbelovyd wyth yonge ond olde, he was full gentyll of dede,

Ther was not oon man in all thys londe that bare a bettyr brede.
Hys fadur bethoght hym on a day, these wordys to hym seyde hee,
"Come hedur," he seyde, "Wyllyam, my sone, and here what y sey thee;
Thou canste on boke, my sone Wyllyam, and gramer undurstonde,
Y have ordeygnyd for thy levyng, tenement, howse and londe;
Thou schalt be an apersey, my sone, in mylys ij. or thre,
Y wolde thou had some fayre syens to amende wyth thy degree;
I wolde thou were a man of lawe, to holde togedur my londe,
Thou schalt be pletyd with, when y am gon, full wele y undurstonde."
"A man of lawe," seyde Wyllyam, "that wyll y nevyr bee!
Y wolde lerne of marchandyse to passe ovyr the see!"
"Yf thou be a marchand," my sone Wyllyam, "the sothe y can telle the,
I have seyn men bothe ryse and falle, hyt ys but caswelté!
Y wolde have the a man of lawe, thys ys the schorte and longe,
Then mayste thou kepe that y leve the, whedyr hyt be ryȝt or wronge."
"Nay, gode fadur," seyde Wyllyam, "be yowre bettur avyse,
Helpe y had a gode maystyr to teche me marchandyse."
Then was Wyllyam prentys made to lerne in marchaundyse;

Hys fadur levyd, as he was wonte, in synne and
covetyse;
So levyd he forthe many a yere, extorcyon he
wolde not leve,
He endytyd many a man hys pore neghburs evyr
to greve;
He lovyd full ylle to pay hys tythe, owthyr in
mony or corne,
He thoght hymselfe rychest of all, of all other men
had he scorne.
He lovyd wele, as y yow say, prestys for to endyte.
Yf he myght gete a mannys gode, he thoght hym
hym nevyr to qwyte.
Thus he drofe forthe hys lyfe dayes wyth mekyll
trecherye,
Tyll sekenesse caght hym sodenly, then wyste he
wele to dye;
He callyd to hym the gentylmen, the beste in that
cuntré,
He prayed them, wyth all hys herte, hys executurs
for to bee.
When they come in hys presence, they seyde hym
schortly "nay,"
For they knewe full wele hys lyfe, how he had
levyd many a day;
Then he preyed other gode yomen, and his neygh-
burs alsoo,
They wolde hys executurs byn, and they seyde
schortly "noo,"
For all the cuntrey knewe full wele, and hyt wele
undurstode,
That wyth false extorcion he had geton moche of
hys gode.
Then thys frankleyn hym be-thoght, and sente
aftur Wyllyam hys sone;
And as soone as evyr he came, he knelyd, as he
schulde done,

Upon the grownde before hys fadur, and askyd hys benysone.
"Thou schalt hyt have, my dere sone, fro the fote up to the crowne;
Sone, why that y for the sende, thys ys the cawse why,
Thou schalte be myn executur, for y am lyke to dye."
"Forsothe, fadur, that ys not beste, take ryche men of thys cuntré,
That may all yowre wylle performe; fadur, take this counsell of me."
"Sone, all they have seyde me nay, and utturly hyt refusydd!"
"In feyth, fadur, so wyll y, and therfore holdyth me excusydd."
"I charge the, sone, in Crystys name, thou take on the thys dede!"
"On a covenaunt, fadur, y wyll, and ellys not, so God me spede!
And ye wyll do, as y yow say, and me youre trowthe plyght,
That ye wyll come and speke with me upon the thrydd nyght."
Thys ryche man hys testament made, and schrofe hym of hys synne,
3yt wolde he no man restore for no crafte that myght byn,
But all he gaf Wyllyam hys sone, to do ryght as he wolde.
Then was he dedd and leyde in clay, and dolvyn undur the molde;
When hyt come to the thrydd nyght, that he schulde come ageyn,
Then was he ledd with fendys blake, that wroght hym mooche payne,

Wyth vij. yron cheynys stronge they ledd hym on every syde,
They bete on hym, wyth brennyng brondys, woundys large and wyde.
He was brennyng in flame of fyre, for peyne he myght not byde,
The erthe tremelyd there Wyllyam stode, so dyd the trees stode hym besyde.
When Wyllyam sawe that delefull syght, he knelyd downe upon hys knee,
He preyed to Jhesu he schulde hym save, and to hys modur mylde Maré,
"In the name of God omnypotente, spyryt, y conyure thee,
That thou do me no harme, but abyde here stylle and speke wyth mee!"
"Wyllyam, sone, y am thy fadur, in peyne as thou may see,
Thus schall y go to domesday, hyt wyll none othyr bee,
And at the day of jugement y schall have doubull peyne,
And caste into the pytt of helle and nevyr come owt ageyne."
"I charge yow, fadur," seyde Wyllyam, "in the name of God almyght,
That ye apere to me ageyne thys tyme fourtenyght!"
The goste toke up a gresely grone, with fendys awey he glode;
Then Wyllyam wente to hys maystyr, no lenger he abode.
Here ys a fytt of thys matere; the bettur ys behynde,
Ye schall here how gode Wyllyam to hys fadur was full kynde.
When Wyllyam come before hys maystyr, he knelyd on hys knee;

The marchande seyde, "Wyllyam, my chylde, what tydyngys now with thee?"
"Trewly, maystyr," seyde Wyllyam, "y am come to yow now
To selle yow my londys all, they falle full wele for yow!"
"Thou schalt not selle thy gode, Wyllyam, be the counsell of me,
Men wyll sey that here therof that thou art nevyr lyke to the;
All thys cuntré wyll speke therof bothe woman, chylde and man,
For to selle so sone awey all that thy fadur wan."
"Gentyl maystyr, sey ye not so, for all my londe hyt schall be yowrys,
Y wyll selle hyt yow frely, bothe townys, hallys, and bowrys;
Y muste nedys selle hyt, maystyr, trewly wythowtyn any lees,
I have levyr that ye have hyt, then ony other man y-wys."
"Y wyll not bye hyt certenly, nor no gode of thyn,
Y refuse hyt utturly, for hyt schall nevyr be myn."
"I am sory, therfore," seyde Wyllyam, "maystyr, that ye wyll hyt not have;
Y muste nedys selle hyt to some othyr man, ryght as God me save!"
"Syn thou wylte nedys selle hyt," seyde the marchand, "what schall y pay therfore?"
"A thousande marke, maystyr, yf ye wyll; y wyll aske yow no more."
"Syn thou wylt nedys selle hyt," seyde the marchand, "thou schalt have money rounde,
Thou schalt have more then thyn askyng, thou schalt have a thousand pounde."
"Fare well now, my dere maystyr, and God hyt yow forȝylde,

Y schall be hastely at yow ageyn with the myght of Mary mylde!"
Then Wyllyam payde hys fadur dettys, as far as he myght here;
To synge for hys fadyr soule he hyred bothe preste and frere,
He delyd and dydd grete almesdede to many a nedefull swayne,
There as hys fadur had done pore men wronge, he restoryd hyt ageyn.
The xiiij. nyght was come to ende, the goste muste pere ageyne,
Fendys of helle they haryed hym thedur, and wroght hym mekyll peyne;
He apperyd full orybully, but not as he dud before,
Hys flamyng fyre was awey, but all in derkenes was he thore;
He was black as any pyche and lothely on to loke,
All for-faren wyth the fyre stynk, and all of smoke.
"Allas, gode fadur," seyde Wyllyam, "be ye not amendyd ȝyt?
To see yow come in thys degré, nere-hande y lese my wytt;
Y have amendyd all youre mys, as far as y cowde knowe,
There on have y spendyd all youre gode and myn, ye may me trowe."
"All thys knowe y not, my sone, forsothe as y telle thee,
All my gode hyt was to lytyll to make amendys for mee."
"Fadur, why appere ye thus in black, ar not yowre synnys foryevyn?"
"Sone, y am lyke to be dampnyd, but yf y have helpe thyn."
"Fadur, full fayne y wolde yow helpe, with all my herte and myght;

To put myselfe to begge my mete, bothe be day
and nyght."
"Sone, y lovyd nevyr to paye my tythe, nor
offryng in Holy Chyrche;
Therfore, sone, these fendys blake me moche wo
they wyrche!"
"Allas! fadur, full wo ys me, that evyr y schulde
abyde thys day,
To see yow in thys penaunce stronge, and all youre
gode ys delte away.
But Jhesu, Lord Almyghty kyng, as thou madyst
me of noght!
And swete Lady, to the y pray, to have my fadur
in thy thoght!
Moste specyall moder in vyrgynyté, beseche thy
sone so precyous,
That he on my fadur have mercy, that sufferyth
grete doulourys!
And all the seyntys that ben in hevyn, specially to
yow y pray,
For my fadur to be medyatour, to helpe hym yf ye
may!
God graunte me grace to do that thynge that may
turne hys soule to hele,
And all the holy felaschypp of hevyn youre preyers
that he may fele;
Fadur, y schall do my parte to helpe yow owt of
peyne,
Yf y schulde leye my selfe to wedd or that ye come
ageyne."
"Y charge yow, fadur," seyde Wyllyam, "in ver-
tue of the Trynyté!
Thys day vij. nyght that ye come ageyn, and speke
ryght here wythe me!
When thys grysly gost was goon, Wyllyam thoght
in hys mode

Hys fadur had broght hym up wyth falsely getyn gode;
He wente unto hys maystyr ageyne, and knelyd upon hys knee,—
"Welcome, Wyllyam," seyde the marchand, "and dere welcome to mee!"
"Y am comyn to yow," seyde Wyllyam, "y pray yow that y may spede,
Ye muste helpe me wyth some gode, y had nevyr so moche nede!"
"Y holde the noght," seyde the marchand, "thou arte nevyr lyke to thee,
Thou haddest a thousand pounde not longe sythen payde of mee;
Thou haste pleyed hyt at the dyse, unthryfty felaws amonge;
Hyt were almes," seyde the marchand, "on galowes the to honge,
Thou wylt nevyr thryve, y wott hyt wele, so sone to lose thy gode,
Trewly of me thou getyst no more, y holde the worse then wode!"
"Now gentyll maystyr, for seynt charyté, y pray yow sey not soo,
Hyt ys not loste nor played at the dyse, but put gode use untoo;
And therfore, maystyr, for Goddys love, helpe me now, y yow beseche,
Y had nevyr so grete nede, ye may knowe be my speche!"
"How woldest thou have more money, thou haste nothyng to selle?"
"Ȝys, gode maystyr," seyde Wyllyam, "lystenyth, y wyll yow telle!
Y wyll selle yow myn own body to serve yow all my lyfe!"

"What wylt thou have?" seyde the marchand, "telle me wythowten stryfe."
"An c. marke," seyde Wyllyam, "that muste y have thys nyght,
And y wyll serve yow all my lyfe, to yow my trowth y plyght!"
An c. marke the marchand tolde, and toke hyt Wyllyam anon;
Wyllyam thanked hym curtesly, and homward can he gon.
Than seyde the marchand to hys wyfe, that rychely was cladd,
"Y am sekur of a goode servand, therof y am full gladd,
For now have y Wyllyams trowth, that was my gode prentys,
For the terme of all hys lyfe, to do me trewe servyse."
"Therof am y gladd," seyde hys wyfe, "thys tydynges lykyth me wele,
Wyllyam ys bothe curtes and hende, and trewe as any stele."
Then Wyllyam wente into the cuntré, in every merket dydd he crye,
To whosoevyr hys fadur oght money that he wolde hyt paye sekyrlye;
Yf any man he had trespaste to, or done hym wronge trewly,
Come to Wyllyam hys sone, and he wyll restore every penye.
He payed hys tythys and hys offryngys fo hym to holy chyrche,
He made hym evyn with every man, as far as he cowde wyrche;
There he be-refte pore man ther gode, and wolde them nevyr restore,

Hys sone restored them ageyne and amendys therfore.
And evyr as he money payde, he preyed them specyally
To pray for hys fadyrs soule, and have hym in ther memorye.
Thus Wyllyam payde for hys fadur, as chylde that was gode,
That gode had he no more, but ryght as he in stode.
"Now tryste y to God," seyde Wyllyam, "for my fadur ys owt of payne,
For as ferre as y can wyt, y have contentyd every man;
Y thanke God that y was borne that y abode thys day,
My fadur ys evyn wyth all the worlde, now dar y savely say."
As Wyllyam walkyd thorow a towne, in myddys of the strete,
An olde man, wyth crochys twayne, sone there can he mete;
"God save yow, my maystyr Wyllyam," seyde the pore man then,
Y have soght yow all thys day, y am gladd now that y yow kenne;
Youre fadur oght me whyll he levyd of mony a curtesye,
Now am y comyn to yow therfore, as ye have made yowre crye."
"Allas! allas!" seyde Wyllyam, "that ye so longe have byn,
All my money ys now goon, y have ryght noght, y wene!
What ys the dette?" seyde Wyllyam, "telle me in thys strete."
"Forsothe," seyde the pore man tho, "but for halfe a quarter of whete."

"Y am sory," seyde Wyllyam, "that y have noght to paye,
But yf ye wyll have my clothyng, ye schall have hyt to day;
But my clothys ar not worthe, that y am sory therfore;
The remnaunt y pray yow to forgyf for now and evyrmore."
"Y wyll gladly," seyde the pore man, "God forgyf hys soule!"
"God he thanke yow," seyde Wyllyam, "and the apostyll Poule!
Y prey yow feythfully," seyde Wyllyam, "pray for my fadur dere."
"Y wyll gladly," seyde the pore man, "hertely y forgyf hym here!"
"God he thanke yow," seyde Wyllyam, "for youre gode herty chere;
Y pray to God that youre dwellyng in hevyn, hyt muste be there."
Wyllyam hymselfe allone ryght evyn abowte mydnyght,
He herde a voyce of aungels songe, and all the worlde was lyght;
He apperydd in grete gladnesse, as bryght as any sonne,
All the yoye that myght be hadd thedyr with hym come;
Ther were aungels withowten nowmbur, that come downe fro hevyn,
Wyth moche myrthe and melodye, forsothe as y yow nevyn.
When Wyllyam sawe that ryall syght, in herte he was full blythe:
"How stondyth hyt, fadur, wyth yow now? y pray yow telle me swythe."

"Sone, all the gode thou dalte for me, hyt vaylyd
me nevyr a dele;
For all that was falsely getyn, and that fonde y
full wele:
Tyll that thou thy selfe solde, y was nevyr lowsyd
of peyne,
For a ferthyng of that dydd me more gode then
dyd all myne certeyne;
The syllyng of thyn owne body hath broght me
clene fro bale,
For thou had no more gode but thy body, hyt was a
gracyous sale!
Thou haste me savydd and broght to blys fro
endeles peyne and woo,
Y blesse the tyme that y the gate, and the where
so thou goo!"
"Y am full gladd, fadur, therof, that evyr y dydd
that dede!"
"Sonne, leve forthe as thou haste done, and hevyn
schall be thy mede;
And y schall pray to God in hevyn that thou may
come to me,
For y am safe and go to blys, thou may bothe here
and see!"
Thus hys fadur yede hym fro full streyght unto
the blysse,
And Wyllyam yede to hys maystyr to do forthe
hys servyse.
When hys maystyr sawe hym come in hys schurte
allone,
"Wyllyam," he seyde, "how ys hyt with the? thow
arte a rewfull grome;
Hyt were almes," seyde the marchand, "in preson
the to caste,
For moche gode haste thou loste and broght unto
waste;

Y had thoght to have made the a man, y pray God
to gyf the care,
Y wyll no more tryste to the to go wyth my
chaffare."
"Maystyr, be ye not dysplesyd, hyt ys not as ye
wene."
"Telle me then how hyt ys, and bringe me owt of
teene."
He tolde hys maystyr all the case for hys fadur
how he had done;
The marchand blessyd hym therfore he was a gra-
cyous sone:
"He may blesse the tyme that thou was borne, to
hym, thou was so kynde,
A man may seke now all Ynglonde or soche a
frende he fynde;
Wyllyam, y have a doghtyr feyre, and sche schall
be thy wyfe,
Y pray to God that ye may bothe wyth yoye lede
to-gedur yowre lyfe:
All thy fadyr londys trewly now gyf y the ageyne,
And thou schalt have all myn also, when y am
dedd, certeyne."
The maryage of them ij. ys made and weddyd byn
in fere,
They acordydd evyr so wele to-gedyr, hyt was
grete yoye to here:
The marchand aftyr in a whyle grete sekenes can
hym take,
Then sende he for Wyllyam hys sone hys executur
hym to make.
When Wyllyam come before hys fadur, he was
full dere welcome,
The marchand then to Wyllyam seyde and tolde
hym all and some,
"Owt of thys worlde, sone, y muste passe, as
Goddys wylle hyt ys,

And all my goodys frely y gyf the wyth yoye and and blysse,
To dyspose for my soule, as hyt beste lykyth the,
And as thou woldyst y dyd for the, y pray the do for me!"
"Maystyr, hyt schall be done wyth all my herte and myght!"
The marchand ȝalde up hys goste, and yede to God full ryght.
Wyllyam hyred for hys maystyr prestys to rede and synge,
To many a pore man gaf he gode and delyd many a schyllyng;
He was a trewe executur, he performyd all hys maystyrs wylle,
And to the blys of hevyn for sothe he broght hym tylle.
Then Wyllyam levyd forthe many a yere, tyll God aftur hym sende,
Wyth grete sekenes was he takyn and in thys worlde made an ende;
He savydd hys fadurs soule and broght hyt unto blys,
Hys maystyrs soule also, wyth hys trewe marchandys!
God let nevyr no trewe man have no falser executur,
For he was gracyously getyn and borne in a goode houre:
To the blys of hevyn God hath hym broght, and set hym on hys ryght honde!
Y prey to God that he so do every gode man of thys londe!
Lythe and lystenyth, gentylmen, that have herde thys songe to ende,
I pray to God at oure laste day to hevyn that we may wende! Amen.

THE MISOGYNIC NIGHTINGALE.

[From MS. Bib, Publ. Cantab. Ff. v. 48.]

In a mornyng of May, as I lay on slepyng,
To here a song of a fowle I had gret likyng;
I herd a ny3tyngale syng, I likyd hir fulle welle,
Sche seid to me a wondur thyng, I shalle telle the every delle.
"Thynk, man, for thi curtesy and for thine owne gode,
Stonde a while and sey me why thou mornyst in thi mode."
"Ni3tyngale, wel y may, and wele I wot and wene,
I morne ny3t and day for on that is so schene."
"Now, clerk, for sothe thou art a fole, that thou mournys so depe,
That now is hot shalbe colde, that now law3gh oft may wepe!"
"Nyghtyngale, she is so gode that no thyng may telle,
Fayre and trwe, mylde of mode, she may me gif and selle."
"Be ware, clerk, I warne the, luf thou not so depe,
When thou levyst in luf to be, nede thou hase to wepe;
A woman is a wondur thyng, thow she be fayre and stille,
She nys trwe to kyng nor kny3t; clerke, to the she nylle."
"Ny3tyngale, why seyst thou so? Thou gabbust in thi tale:
Wymmen bryng men owt [of] woo, she is bote of alle bale;
Ne art thou not to lore sete, and wist of olde and newe,

Treue thi love and lockyt bothe, that werk is not trwe."
"Alle woo a woman began, she was begynyng;
Wyttenesse Adam the formast man, that is no lesyng."
"Nyȝtyngale, that wot I wele, a woman wroȝt a shame,
Another, I telle the every delle, broȝt us alle to game!"
"Be stille, clerk, thou art unwyse, thou spekist of a mayde
That bare the of paradys that our foomen frayed;
Name hir to no woman, to mayden nor to wyfe,
For thou knowist, nor I ne kan, non so trwe of life.
I take wyttenesse of Davyd kyng and at Salomon the wyse,
That a woman for a litulle thyng ofte change hir servyse;
Luf a woman as thi lyfe, and kepe hir alle with wynne,
For a purse or for a knyfe, when on is owt another is in."
"Niȝtyngale, thou gabbist me, wymmen be fayre and hende,
Ful of game and of glee wher so thei wende;
Were a mon in sorow broȝt, wymmen myȝt out hym bryng,
With a loking turne his thoȝt, and with a kysse turne his mournyng."
"Clerke, if thou wil riȝt begynne, rede and undurstonde,
Mannes thoȝt chaungis with synne, wel oft thou turnyd fonde;
Kysse of women wyrkyth wo with synne mony folde,
Judas kissed God also, and to the Jewes he hym solde."

"Clerk, as thou art wyse, thou lovyst wel hir lokyng,
When thi purse shakyn is, farewel, clerk, thi cossyng!"
"Nyȝtyngale, thou spekist noȝt, late be alle thi fare,
How shulde men be forth broȝt ne wymmen ware?"
"Therto onswer I can, without any stodying,
Wymmen was for mankynd forth to bryng;
She was made to helpe man, and no thyng for to leve,
Thou myȝtes that wete at Adam, but thou ne wilt me leve.
I sey alle wymmen are mysse gon, on gode is not in londe,
Men thruȝ wymmen be shent, and ofte broȝt in bonde;
For I fynde non so gode, be way ne be strete,
But a man may change hir note, if his purse wey grete."

A POEM ON DEATH.

[From the Thornton MS. in Lincoln cathedral.]

When Adam dalfe and Eve spane,
Go spire, if thou may spede,
Whare was than the pride of mane,
That nowe merres his mede?
Of erthe and lame as was Adam
Makede to noye and nede,
We er als he maked to be,
Whilles we this lyfe salle lede.
With I. and E. borne er we,
As Salomone us highte,
To travelle here whilles we er fere,
As fewle unto the flyghte!

In werlde we ware casten for care,
To we ware worthi to wende
To wele or wa, ane of thase twa

To welde withowtene ende;
For-thi whills thou may helpe the nowe,
Amend the, and hafe mynde,
When thou salle ga he bese thi faa,
That here was are thi frende.
With E. and I. I rede for-thi,
Umthynke the ay of thre,
What we er and whate we warre,
And whate that we salle be.

Ware thou als wysse praysede in pryce,
Als was Salomone,
Wele fairere fude, of bane and blude,
That was Absolone,
Strenghely and strange to wreke thi wrang,
As ever was Sampsone,
Thou ne myghte a day, na mare than thay,
The dede withstand allone!
With I. and E. the dede to the
Salle come, als I the kenne,
Bot thou ne wate in whatekyn state,
Ne how, ne whare, ne whenne.

When bemes salle blawe rewly one rawe,
To rekkenynge buse us ryse;
When he salle comme unto that domme,
Jhesu to sitt justyse,
That are was leve, thane mone be greve,
Whenne alle gastis salle ryse,
I say that thane to synfulle mane
Sary bese that assise!
With I. and E. he salle noghte flee,
If alle he his giltes fele;
He ne may hym hide, bot thare habyde,
Ne fra that dome appelle.

Of all thyne aughte that the was raughte,

Salle thou noghte hafe, I hete,
Bot sevene fote, tharein to rote,
And a wyndynge schete!
For-thi thou gyffe, whils thou may lyfe,
Or alle gase that thou may gete,
Thi gaste fra Godd, thi gudes olodde,
Thi flesche foldes undir fete.
With I. and E. fulle sekire thou be,
That thynne executurs
Of the ne wille rekke, bot skikk and skekke
Fulle baldely in thi boures.

To dome we drawe, the sothe to schawe,
In lyfe that us was lente,
No Latyne ne lawe may helpe an hawe,
Bot rathely us repente!
The croice, the crownne, the spere bese bowne
That Jhesu ruggede and rente,
The nayles ruyde salle the conclude
With thyne awene argument!
With E. and O. take kepe thareto,
Als Criste hymselfe us kende;
We comme and goo to wele or wo,
That dredfulle dome salle ende!

Of wille and with that vesettis it
In worde, and that we wroghte,
Rekkene we mone and ȝelde resone
Fulle rathely of oure thoghte;
Salle no fallace cufere our case,
Ne consaile gette we noghte;
No gylte ne grace nother thare gase,
Bot brwke as we hafe broghte.
With E. and I. I rede, for-thi
Be warre nowe with thi werkes,
For terymes of ȝere hafe thou nane here,
Thi medes salle be thi merkes.

What so it be that we here see,
The fairehede of thi face,
Thi ble so bryghte, thi mayne, thi myghte,
Thi mouthe that myrthis mase,
Alle mone als was to powdir passe,
To grave whenne that thou gase;
A grysely geste than bese thou preste,
In armes for to brace;
With I. and E. for leve thou me,
Bese nane, as I the hete,
Of alle thi kyth dare slepe the with
A nyghte undire thi schete!

THE MAID AND THE MAGPIE.

[From MS. Rawl. C. 258.]

Throughe a forest as I can ryde,
  To take my sporte yn an mornyng,
I cast my eye on every syde,
  I was ware of a bryde syngynge.

I sawe a faire mayde come rydyng,
  I speke to hur of love I trowe;
She answered me alle yn scornyng,
  And sayd, the crowe shalle byte yow.

I pray yow, dameselle, scorne me nott,
  To wyn your love ytt ys my wylle;
For your love I have dere bought,
  And I wylle take good hede thertylle.

Nay, for God, ser, that I nylle,
  I telle the, Jenken, as I trowe;
Thow shalt nott fynde me suche a gylle,
  Therfore the crowe shall byte yow.

He toke then out a good golde ryng,
  A purse of velweytt that was soo fyne;

Have ye thys, my dere swetyng,
  With that ye wylbe lemman myne.

Be Cryst, I dare nott, for my dame,
  To dele with hym that I do nott knowe;
For soo I myght dyspyse my name,
  Therfore the crow shalle byte yow.

He toke hur abowte the mydelle smalle,
  That was soo faire of hyde and hewe;
He kyssed hur cheke as whyte as whalle,
  And prayed hur that she wolde upon hym rewe.

She scornyd hym and callyd hym Hew,
  His love was as a paynted blewe,
To-day me, to-morowe a newe,
  Therfore the crow shalle byte yow.

He toke hur abowte the myddelle smalle,
  And layd hur downe upon the grene,
Twys or thrys he served hur soo withalle,
  He wolde nat stynt yet as I wene.

But sythe ye have i-lyen me bye,
  Ye wylle wedde me now, as I trowe.
I wylle be advysed, Gylle, sayd he,
  For now the pye hathe peckyd yow.

But sythe ye have i-leyn me by,
  And broght my body unto shame,
Some of your good ye wylle part with me,
  Or elles be Cryst ye be to blame.

I wylbe advysyd, he sayde,
  The wynde ys wast that thow doyst blowe;
I have anoder that most be payde,
  Therfore the pye hathe pecked yow.

Now sythe ye have i-leyn me bye,
  A lyttle thyng ye wylle telle,
In case that I with chylde be,
  What ys your name? Where doo ye dwelle?

At Yorke, at London, at Clerkenwelle,
At Leycester, Cambryge, at myrye Brystowe;
Some calle me Rychard, Robert, Jacke and Wylle,
For now the pye hathe peckyd yow.

But, alle medons, be ware be rewe,
And lett no man downe yow throwe;
For and yow doo, yee wylle ytt rewe,
For then the pye wylle pecke yow.

Farewell, corteore, over the medoo
Pluke up your helys, I beshrew yow!
Your trace where so ever ye ryde or goo,
Crystes curse goo wythe yow!

Thoughe a knave hathe by me leyne,
Yet am I never dede nor sleyne,
I trust to recover my harte agayne,
And Crystes curse goo wythe yow.

ELEGY ON LOBE, HENRY VIII.'S FOOL.

[From MS. Rawl. C. 258.]

The epytaphye of Lobe, the kynges foole.

O lobbe Lobe, on thy dowle God have mercye,
For as Petre ys *princeps apostolorum*,
Soo to the may be sayd clerlye,
Of alle foolys that ever was *stultus stultorum*.
Sure thy dowle ys yn *regna polorum*,
By reason of reason thow haddest none,
Yet alle foolys be nott deed, Lobe, thouȝ thou be gone.

The losse of the, Lobe, maketh many sorye,
Thouȝhe ytt be nott alle for thyn awn sake,
Butt the kyng and the quene thou madyst so merye,
With the many good pastimes that thou dydes make.

Thy lyfe to be bought, I dare undurtake,
Gold nor sylver there shuld lake none;
Yet foolys be inoghe, thouȝhe thou be gone.

Thow wast a foole, withowten fraude,
Shapte and borne of very nature,
Of alle good foolys to the may be laude,
For every man yn the hade gret plesure:
For owre kyng and quene thou wast a tresure.
Alas for them! wher shuld we have suche on?
Yet alle foolys be nott deed, thouȝhe thou be gone.

Thow wast nother Erasmus nor Luter,
Thow dydes medle no forther then thy potte!
Agaynst hye matters thou wast noo dysputer,
Among the Innocentes electe was thy lotte!
Glade mayst thow be thou haddyst that knotte,
For many folys by the thynke themselfe none,
Yet alle be not deed, Lobe, thouȝhe thou be gone.

Tyt Apguyllamys, prepare his obsequi,
Nature constrenyth yow to doo hym good,
The mad ladye Apylton offer the masse penye,
And ye as chefe moerner yn your own folys hode.
Your wyttes were myche lyke, thouȝe nothyng of blode,
Save yn hym was muche goodness and yn yow ys none,
Yet ye be a foole and Lobe ys gonne.

Now lobe Lobe, God have mercy on thy mery noole,
And Lobe, God have mercye on thy folyshe face;
And Lobe, God have mercye on thy innocent sowle,
Whyche amonges innocentes I am sure hath a place,
Or ellys my sowle ys yn a hevy case;
Ye, ye, and moo foolys mony one,
For folys be alyve, Lobe, thouȝh thou be gone.

Nowe God have mercye on us alle,
For wyse and folyshe alle dyethe;
Let us truly to owre myndes calle,
And to say we be wyse owre dedes denyethe.
Wherfore the ende my reason thys aplyethe,
God amend alle folys that thynke themselfe none,
For many be alyve, thouȝhe Lobe be gone.

A BALLAD ON MONEY.

[From MS. Bib. Reg. 17 B. xlvii, fol. 160, vº.]

Money, money.

Money, money, now hay goode day!
Money, where haste thow be?
Money, money, thow goste away,
And wylt not byde wyth me.

Above all thyng thow arte a kyng,
And rulyst the world over all;
Who lakythe the, all joy, pardé,
Wyll sone then frome hym ffall.
Money, &c.

In every place thow makyste solas,
Gret joye, sporte, and welfare;
When money ys gone, comforte ys none,
But thowght, sorowe, and care.
Money, &c.

In kynges corte wher money dothe route,
Yt makyth the galandes to jett;
And for to were gorgeouse ther gere,
Ther cappes awry to sett.
Money, &c.

In they hey weyes, ther joly palfreys
Yt makyght to lepe and praunce;

It maket justynges, pleys, dysguysynges,
  Ladys to synge and daunce.
          Money, &c.

For he that alway wantyth money
  Stondyth a mated chere;
Can never wel syng, laug, daunce, nor spr[y]nge,
  Nor make no lusty chere.
          Money, &c.

At cardes and dyce yt bereth the pryce,
  As kyng and emperoure:
At tables, tennes, and al othere games,
  Money hathe ever the floure.
          Money, &c.

Wythe squyer and knyght, and every wyght,
  Money maketh men fayne,
And causeth many in sume compeney
  Theyr felowes to dysdayne.
          Money, &c.

In marchandys who can devyse
  So good a ware, I say?
At al tymys the best ware ys
  Ever redy money.
          Money, &c.

Money to i[n]cresse, marchandys never to cease
  Wyth many a sotell wyle;
Men say the wolde, for sylver and golde,
  Thur owne faders begyle.
          Money, &c.

Women, I trowe, love money also,
  To by them joly gere;
For that helpythe, and oft causethe
  Women to loke full fayre.
          Money, &c.

In Westmynster hall the criers call,
The sergeauntes plede apace;
Attorneys appere now here now ther
Renning in every place.
Money, &c.

Whatesoevery he be, and yf that he
Whante money to plede the lawe,
Do whate he cane in ys mater than
Shale not prove worthe a strawe.
Money, &c.

I know yt not, but well I wotte
I have harde oftyn tymys tell,
Prestes use thys guyse, ther benefyce
For money to bey and sell.
Money, &c.

Craftysmen that be in every cyté,
They worke and never blynne;
Sum cutte, sum shave, sume knoke, sum grave,
Only money to wynne.
Money, &c.

The plowman hymselfe dothe dyge and delve
In storme, snowe, frost, and rayne,
Money to get with laboure and swete,
Yet small geynes and muche peyne.
Money, &c.

And sume for money lye by the wey,
Another mannes purse to gett;
But they that long use yt amonge
Ben hangyd by the neke!
Money, &c.

The beggers eke in every strete
Ly walowyng by the wey;
They begge, the crye of the cume by,
And all ys but for money.
Money, &c.

In every coste men love yt moste,
  In Ynglonde, Spayne, and France;
For every man lackyng yt than
  Is clene owte of countenaunce.
Money, &c.

Of whate degré soever he be,
  Or verteouse conyng he have,
And wante moné, yet men wyll sey
  That he ys but a knave.
Money, &c.

Where in dede, so God me spede,
  Sey all men whate they cane,
Yt ys all-wayes sene now-a-dayes,
  That money makythe the man.
Money, &c.

FINIS.

ROBERT OF SICILY.

[From MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38.]

Pryncis that be prowde in prese,
I wylle that that ys no lees;
Yn Cysylle was a nobulle kynge,
Fayre and stronge, and some dele ȝynge;
He had a brodur in grete Rome,
That was pope of alle Crystendome;
Of Almayne hys odur brodur was emperowre,
Thorow Crystendome he had honowre.
The kynge was calde kynge Roberd,
Never man in hys tyme wyste hym aferde.
He was kynge of grete valowre,
And also callyd conquerowre;
Nowhere in no lande was hys pere,
Kynge nor dewke, ferre nor nere,

And also he was of chevalrye the flowre:
And hys odur brodur was emperowre.
Hys oon brodur in ȝorthe Godes generalle vykere,
Pope of Rome, as ye may here;
Thys pope was callyd pope Urbane,
For hym lovyd bothe God and man;
The emperowre was callyd Valamownde,
A strawnger warreowre was none fownde
Aftur hys brodur the kyng of Cysyle,
Of whome y thynke to speke a whyle.
The kynge thoght he had no pere
For to acownte, nodur far nor nere,
And thorow hys thoght he had a pryde,
For he had no pere he thoȝt on no syde;
And on a nyght of seynt Johan,
Thys kynge to the churche come
For to here hys evynsonge,
Hys dwellynge thoȝt he there to longe;
He thoght more of worldys honowre,
Then of Cryste hys saveowre.
In *magnificat* he harde a vers,
He made a clerke to hym hyt to reherse
In the langage of hys owne tonge,
For in Laten wyste he not what they songe;
The verse was thys, as y telle the,
Deposuit potentes de sede,
Et exaltavit humiles,
Thys was the verse, withowten lees;
The clerke seyde anon ryght,
"Syr, soche ys Godys myght,
That he make may hye lowe,
And lowe hye in a lytylle throwe!
God may do, withowten lye,
Hys wylle in the twynkelyng of an ye!"
The kyng seyde than, with thoȝt unstabulle,
"Ye synge thys ofte and alle hys a fabulle!

What man hath that powere
To make me lowear and in dawngere?
I am flowre of chevalrye,
Alle myn enmyes y may dystroye!
Ther levyth no man, in no lande,
That my myght may withstande!
Then ys yowre songe a songe of noght!"
Thys arrowre had he in hys thoght,
And in hys thoght a slepe hym toke
In hys closet, so seyth the boke.
When evynsonge was alle done,
A kynge hym lyke owte can come,
And alle men with hym can wende,
And kynge Roberd lefte behynde.
The newe kynge was, y yow telle,
Godys aungelle, hys pryde to felle;
The aungelle in the halle yoye made,
And alle men of hym were glade!
Kynge Roberd wakenyd that was in the kyrke,
Hys men he thoȝt woo for to wyrke,
For he was lefte there allone,
And merke nyght felle hym upon:
He began to crye upon hys men,
But there was none that answeryd then,
But the sexten at the ende
Of the kyrke, and to hym can wende,
And seyde, "Lurden, what doyst thou here?
Thou art a thefe or thefeys fere!
Thou arte here, sykerlye,
Thys churche to robbe with felonye."
He seyde, "Fals thefe, and fowle gadlyng!
Thou lyest falsely! y am thy kynge!
Opyn the churche dore anon,
That y may to my pales gone!"
The sexesten went welle than
That he had be a wode man,

And of hym he had farlye,
And wolde delyver the churche in hye,
And openyd the dore ryȝt sone in haste.
The kyng began to renne owte faste,
As a man that was nere wode,
And at hys pales ȝate he stode,
And callyd the portar, "Gadlyng! begone!"
And bad hym come faste and hye hym soone,
Anon the ȝates that thou undoo!
The portar askyd who bad soo.
And he answeryd ryght soone anon,
"Thou schalt wytt or y hens gone,
Thy lorde y am, that schalt thou knowe,
In pryson schalt thou lye fulle lowe,
And bothe be hangyd and be drawe,
And odur moo, as be the lawe;
I schalle yow teche me for to knawe,
And brynge yow fro yowre lyfe dawe;
Thou schalt wyt that y am kynge,
Do opyn the ȝatys, thou false gadlynge!"
The porter seyde, "For sothe, y telle the,
The kyng ys in the halle with hys meyné;
Welle, y wote, withowten dowte,
The kynge ys not thus late owte!"
The porter went into the halle,
And before the kynge can falle,
And seyde, "Ther ys, lorde, at the ȝate,
A nyce fole comyn ther to late,
And seyth he ys here lorde and kynge,
And callyth me false and fowle gadlynge!
Lorde, what wylle ye that y doo?
Let hym yn or let hym goo?"
The aungelle seyde to hym in haste,
"Let hym in come swythe faste,
For my fole y schalle hym make!"
The portar came unto the ȝate,

Lo! how soone, be Goddys myght,
He was lowe, and that was ryght!
He was evyr so harde bestadd,
That mete nor drynke noon he had,
But hys babulle was in hys hande.
The aungelle before hym made hym to stande,
And seyde, "Fole, art thou kynge?"
He seyde, "Ye, wythowte lesynge,
And here-aftur kynge wylle bee!"
The aungelle seyde, "So semyth the!"
Honger and thurste he had fulle grete,
For he myght no mete ete,
But howndys ete of hys dysche,
Whedur hyt were flesche or fysche;
When that the howndes had etyn ther fylle,
Then myȝt he ete at hys wylle.
He was to dethe nere broght
For honger, or he wolde ete oght;
But when hyt wolde non odur be,
He ete with howndys grete plenté,
With the howndes that were in the halle;
How myȝt to hym harder befalle?
Bettur he were, to yow sey y,
So to do then for hunger dye.
Ther was not in the court grome ne page,
But they of the kyng made game and rage,
For no man myght hym not knowe,
He was so dysfygerde in a throwe.
With howndys every nyght he laye,
And ofte he cryed, welle awaye!
That ever ȝyt that he was borne,
Hys ryalté he had for-lorne!
He was to alle men undurlynge,
So lowe was never ȝyt no kynge!
Yf pryde had not bene, y understande,
A wyser kynge was never in lande;

With hys pryde God can hym greve,
God boȝt hym dere and wolde hym not leve;
God made hym to knowe hys chastysynge,
To be a fole that afore was kynge.
The aungelle was kyng fulle longe,
But in hys tyme was never no wrong,
Trechery, falsehed, nor no gyle,
Done in the lande of Cysyle;
Of alle gode there was plenté,
Amonge men love and charyté,
And in hys tyme was never stryfe
Nodur betwene man nor wyfe,
But every man lovyd welle odur,
Bettur love was never of brodur.
Then was that a yoyfulle thynge,
In londe to have soche a kynge;
Kynge he was iij. yere and more,
And Roberd as a fole ȝede thore.
The aungelle askyd hym every day,
"Fole, art thou kyng? thou me say."
He seyde, "Ye, that welle y knowe,
My brodur schalle brynge the fulle lowe!"
"That semyth the wele," seyde the aungelle,
"The crowne semyth the no thyng welle."

Than Sir Valamownde, the emperowre,
Sende lettyrs of grete honowre
To hys brodur of Cysyle the kynge,
To come to hym withowte lettynge,
That they myght bothe in same
Wende to ther brodur, the pope of Rome,
To see hys nobulle and ryalle arraye
In Rome, on Halowe Thursdaye;
The aungelle welcomyd the messengerys,
And clad them alle in clothys of pryse,
Aud furryd them with armyne,

And calde hym swythe yn ther-ate.
And he began for to debate,
He smote the porter when he came yn,
That the blode braste owt at mowthe and chyn.
The portar ȝalde hym hys travayle,
He smote hym agayne, withowten fayle,
That mowthe and nose braste on blode,
And then he semyd almoost wode!
The porter and hys men in haste
Kynge Roberd in a podelle caste;
Unsemely was hys body than,
That he was lyke non odur man;
Then broȝt they hym before the kynge,
And seyde, "Lorde, thys gadlynge
Me hath smetyn withowten deserte,
And seyth that he ys owre kynge aperte!
He seyde y schulde be drawe and honge,
Hys owne dome ys ryght he fonge;
To me he seyde non odur worde,
But that he was bothe kynge and lorde;
The traytur schulde, for hys sawe,
Be the lawe bothe be hangyd and drawe!"
The aungelle seyde to kyng Roberde,
"Thou art a foole, that art not aferde
My men to do soche velanye,
That ylke trespas thou muste abye!
What art thou?" seyde the aungelle.
Tho seyde Roberd, "Thou schalt wyt welle,
I am kynge and kynge wylle bee,
Wyth wrange thou haste my dygnyté!
The pope of Rome ys my brodur,
The emperowre Valamownde ys the todur,
He wylle me awreke, y dar welle telle,
I wot he wylle not longe dwelle!"
"Thou art a fole," seyde the aungelle,
"Thou schalt be schavyn ovyr ylke a dele,

Lyke a fole and a fole to bee,
Thy babulle schalle be thy dygnyté!
Thy crowne schalle be newe schorne,
For thy crowne of golde ys lorne;
Thy councellere schalle be an ape,
And in a clothyng ye schalle be schape,
And he schalle be thyn own fere,
Some wytt of hym ȝyt may thou lere!
He schalle be cladd ryght as thy brodur,
Of oon clothyng, hyt schalle be non odur;
Howndys, how so hyt be falle,
Schalle ete wyth the in the halle;
Thou schalt ete on the grownde,
Thyn assayar schalle be an hownde
To assaye thy mete before the,
For thou art a kynge of dygnyté!"
They broght a barbur hym beforne,
That as a fole schulde be schorne,
Alle arownde lyke a frere,
And then ovyr-twhart to eydur ere,
And on the crowne hym make a crosse,
Then he began to crye and make noyse;
He sware that they schulde alle dye
That dud hym soche velanye!
And ever he seyde he was ther lorde,
And alle men scornyd hym for that worde,
And every man seyde that he was wode,
That provyd wele he cowde no gode;
For he wende, on no kyns wyse,
That myghtfulle God cowde devyse
Hym to brynge to lowar estate,
And with a draght he was chekmate.
At lowar degré he myght not bee,
Then become a fole, as thynkyth me,
And every man made scornynge
Of hym, that afore was a nobulle kynge!

Ther was never ȝyt pellere half so fyne;
And alle was set with perrye,
Ther was never nŏ better in crystyanté;
Soche clothyng and hyt were to dyght,
Alle crysten men hyt make ne myght,
Where soche clothys were to selle,
Nor who them made, can no man telle.
On that wondyrd alle that lande,
Who wroȝt those clothys with any hande.
The messengerys went with the kynge
To grete Rome, withowte lesynge;
The fole Roberd with hym went,
Clad in a fulle sympulle garment,
With foxe tayles to renne abowte,
Men myght hym knowe in alle the rowte;
A babulle he bare agenste hys wylle,
The aungels harte to fulfylle.
To Rome came the aungelle soone,
So ryalle a kyng came never in Rome;
Alle men wondurd fro whens he came,
So welle hys rayment sate hym on.
The aungelle was clad alle in whyte,
Ther was never in ȝerthe snowe hyt lyke,
And alle was cowchyd with perlys ryche,
Bettur were nevyr nor noon them lyche;
Alle was whyte, atyre and stede,
The sted was feyre, where that he yede,
So feyre a stede as he on rode,
Was never man that ever bestrode,
And so was alle hys apparelle dyght,
The ryches can not telle no wyght.
Of clothys, gyrdyls, and odur thynge,
Every squyer semyd a kynge.
Alle they rode in ryche arraye,
But kyng Roberd, y dar wele saye,
For alle men on hym can pyke,

For he rode non odur lyke,
But ofte he made sory chere,
That schulde be kyng and kynges fere,
That rode in Rome and bare an ape,
And hys clothyng fulle evylle schape,
That so be foly a fole was made,
A wondur hyt were yf he were glade!
The pope and the emperowre also,
And odur barons many moo,
Welcomyd the aungelle as for kynge,
And made yoye for hys comynge:
Forthe then came stertyng kyng Roberd,
As fole and man that was not aferde,
And lowde on hym he began to speke,
And seyde hys bredyrn schulde hym awreke
Of hym that hath, with queynt gyle,
Hys crowne and lande of Cysyle.
Pope, emperowre, nor non odur,
The fole knewe not for ther brodur;
God put hym in odur lyknes,
For hys grete unbuxumnes;
A mekylle fole he was holde,
More then thars be an c. folde,
To calle soche a brodurhede,
Hyt was holdyn a folys dede.
Tho thre bredyr made grete comfort,
The aungelle was made brodur be sorte;
Wele was the pope and the emperowre,
That had a brodur of soche honowre.
Kynge Roberd began to make care,
Mekylle more then he can are:
For he trowyd of alle thynge
Hys bredur schulde have made hym kynge;
And when hys hope was alle awaye,
He seyde, "Allas! and wele away!"
The pope, the emperowre, and the kynge,

Fyve wekys made they ther dwellynge;
And when the v.the weke was alle done,
To ther own londes went they home,
Bothe the emperowre and the kynge,
There was a feyre departynge!
When every oon of odur leeve can take,
The fole Robert grete sorow can make,
When no brodur hym can knowe,
"Allas!" he seyde, "now am y lowe!"
He thoght mekylle in that case,
How he was lowe; he seyde, "Allas!"
He thoght upon Nabegodhonosore,
"A nobulle kynge was he before,
In alle the worlde was not hys pere,
For to acownt, nodur far nor nere;
Wyth hym was Sir Olyverne,
Prynce of knyghtes, stowte and sterne;
Olyverne sware evyrmore,
Be god Nabegodhonosore,
For he helde no god in lande
But Nabegodhonosore, y understande;
Nabegodhonosore was then fulle gladd,
When he the name of God hadd,
And lovyd Olyverne welle the more,
And sythen hyt grevyd them bothe fulle sore:
Olyverne dyed in grete dolowre,
For he was slayne in a harde schowre;
Nabegodhonosore was in deserte,
He durste not nowhere be aperte;
Fyftene yêre he levyd thare,
Wyth rotys, and grasse, and evylle fare,
And alle of mosse hys clothyng was,
And that came alle be Godys grace,
For pryde was that every dele,
Therwith lykyd hym nothyng wele.
He cryed mercy with sory chere,

And God hym restored as he was ere.
And now y am in soche a case,
Ye, and in welle warse then ever he was.
When God me gave soche honowre,
That y was callyd conquerowre;
In every lande of Crystendome
Of me they spake, bothe alle and some,
And seyde, nowhere ys my peré,
In no lande, nodur farre nor nere;
And thorow that worde, y felle in pryde,
As the aungelle that can of hevyn glyde,
And with the twynklyng of an eye
God for-dud alle that maystrye;
And so hath he done my for gylte,
Now am y of my lande pylte,
And that ys ryght that y so bee,
For, Lorde, y leevyd not on the!
I had an errowre in my harte,
And that errowre hath made me to smarte;
For when y seyde, in my sawe,
That nothynge myght make me lawe,
And holy wrytt dyspysed withalle,
And for-thy wrech of wrechys men me calle,
And fole of alle folys y am ȝyt,
For he ys a fole, God wottyth welle hyt,
That turneth hys wytt unto folye,
So have y done, mercy y crye!
Now, mercy, Lorde, for thy pyté!
Aftur my gylte geve not me!
Let me abye hyt in my lyve,
That y have synned with wyttes fyve;
For hyt ys ryght a fole that y bee,
Now, Lorde, of thy fole thou have pyté!
Ryght so how that hyt befalle,
I ete with the howndys in the halle,
And leve so here for evyrmore,

As levyd Nabegodhonosore!"
When he to Cryste thus can calle,
Downe in swowne can he falle,
And evyr he seyde, with mylde mode,
"I thanke the, Lorde, that ys so gode!
Of my kyngdome me grevyth noȝt,
Hyt ys for my gylt and leder thoght!
Evyr thy fole, Lorde, wylle y bee:
Now, Lorde, of thy fole thou have pyté!"
The aungelle came into Cysyle,
He and hys men, withynne a whyle;
When he came into the halle,
The fole he gart before hym calle,
And seyde, "Fole, art thou kynge?"
"Nay, sir," he seyde, "withowte lesynge."
"What art thou?" seyde the aungelle.
"Syr, a fole, that wote ye welle,
And more then a fole, and hyt may bee,
I kepe non odur dygnyté!"
The aungelle then to chaumbur went,
And aftur the fole anon he sente;
He bad hys men forthe of the chaumbur to gone,
There was lefte noon but he allone
And the fole that stode hym by,
To hym he seyde, "Thou haste mercye!
God hath forgevyn the thy mysdede,
And ever here-aftur loke thou hym drede!
Thynke how thou was owte pylte
Of thy lande, for thy mysgylte,
To the lowest state that ys in lande,
That ys a fole, y undurstande!
A fole thou were to hevyn kynge,
And therfore thou art an undurlynge!
I am an aungelle of renowne,
Sente to kepe thy regyowne!
More blysse me schalle befalle,

In hevyn amonge my ferys alle,
Ye in oon owre of a day,
Then in erthe, y dar welle saye,
In an hundurd thousande yere,
Thogh alle the worlde, far and nere,
Were alle myn at my lykynge:
I am an aungelle and thou art kynge!"
He went in the twynklyng of an yee,
No more of hym there was sye!
Kyng Roberd came into the halle,
Hys men he gart before hym calle,
And alle they were at hys wylle,
As to ther lorde, for hyt was skylle;
He loveyd God and holy kyrke,
And evyr he thoght welle to wyrke,
He levyd aftur two yere and more,
And loovyd God and alle hys lore.
The aungelle gaf hym in warnynge
Of the tyme of hys levynge.
When the tyme came of hys day soone,
He made to wryte ryght anone,
How God, be hys mekylle myght,
Made hym lowe, as hyt was ryght;
For he wende he myght not be
Thorow Godes myȝt at lowar degré:
He was made lowe in a lytylle throwe,
And that was kyd and fulle welle knowe,
To be a fole to every knave,
More schame myght he not have!
He ete and laye with howndys eke,
Thogh he were prowde, hyt wolde hym meke;
To alle men he was scornynge,
Loo! here was a dolefulle thynge,
That he schulde so, for hys pryde,
Soche happe among hys men betyde.
Welle may ye wete hyt dyd hym gode,

Hyt made hym meke that arst was wode;
Hyt made hym to knowe God Allmyght,
That hym broght to hevyn lyght.
Thys story he sente every dele,
To hys brodur undur hys sele;
And to the tyme of hys laste day,
For that tyme he dyed, as he can saye,
Hys bredur thoght wele on the fole,
That cryed to them with mekylle dole,
And wyste wele that he was ther brodur,
And knewe sothely hyt was non odur.
In Cysyle knewe hyt many moo,
That were with hym, when hyt was soo;
The pope of Rome hereof can preche,
And the pepulle he can teche,
That ther pryde they schulde forsake,
And to gode vertues they schulde them take;
And seyde hys brodur that was kynge,
For hys pryde was an undurlynge;
For pryde ys ferre fro God Allemyght,
Hyt may not come in hys syght;
For pryde wolde, yf hyt myght bee,
Ovyr-mownte Goddys dygnyté,
And alle at hys owne wylle,
Thus, thorow pryde, may man hym spylle!
Thys storye ys, withowten lye,
At Rome wretyn in memorye,
At Seynt Petur kyrke hyt ys knawe,
And that ys Crystys owne lawe,
That lowe be hye, at Godys wylle,
And hye lowe, thogh hyt be ylle!
Prey we now to God in Trynyté,
That ys so gode in dygnyté,
That he graunt us that ylk blysse,
That he hath ordeyned for alle hys!
Amen!

SPIRITUAL REMEDIES.

[From MS. Cantab. Ff. i. 6.]

As I walkyd apone a day,
  To take the eyre of fylde and floure,
Apon a mylde mornyng of May,
  Whene floures ben fulle of swete savoure,
I harde on say, O God for ay,
  Hough long shalle I leve in my doloure?
Apone hys kneys he gane pray,
  Swete Jhesu sende me sum socoure!
Maryes sone, most of honoure,
  That ryche and pore may ponyche and please,
Lys me now in my longoure,
  And gyf me lysens to lyve in ease.

To lyve in ease thy lawes to kepe,
  Graunt me grace, Lorde, in blys soo bryght,
That I never in that cabane crepe,
  Ther Lusifer ys lokyne withoutyne lyght.
My myddelle woundys they bene derne and depe,
  Ther ys no plaster that persyth aryght,
Her smertyng wylle nat suffre me to slepe,
  Tylle a leche with dewté have theme dyght.
Hit most be a curet, a crouned wyght,
  That knowth that quaysy frome ben and pese,
Or ellys theyre medsyns they have no myght
  To geve a mane lysens to lyve in ease.

This wound norysshyth woundes sevyn,
  Superbia ys the most prinsipalle,
Pryde pertly in Englysshe stevene,
  For he ys more bytter thene ever was galle;
I have had ther-to lechys aleven,
  And they gave me medysins alle,

The sovereynyst medesyne that ys under heven,
  Hyt growes nother in ground nother walle.
Umylitas I hard a clerke it calle,
  Had I hit I were at ease;
Lorde, sende it unto the syke tharlle,
  And gyff me lysens to lyve in ease!

A wycked wound hath me walled,
  And traveyld me frome topp to too;
This wracched worlde hit may be called,
  Hit hath many a blayne black and bloo.
Hit hurtys my soule, it makes me to halt,
  In hed, in hond, in hart alsoo;
Nad I bene babtyzyd in water and salt,
  This ferdly fester wolde never me froo.
This leche lyssyd me lazars and moo,
  Davith and Danyelle of her dysease,
Amend my wound that doth me woo,
  And gyff me lysens to lyve in ease.

Invidia the therd wound ys,
  A wyckkyd gnawer or venym or gowt,
He ys a wyckyd wound I gess,
  Ther he hath power to reyne or rought;
The condyssion of the wound ys this,
  To brenne my brest within and withoute;
I asked a lech what myght me lyss,
  He toke me *carytas* and put it in a clout,
And bade me bame me welle aboute,
  Whene hit wolde other water or wese,
And sone after, withoutyn doute,
  Than shold I have lysens to lyve in ease.

Ira ys a wyckyd wound,
  He ravesshith me both raw and rede,
And alle my cors he wolle confound,
  So sore he swellyth in hart and hede;

There ys none erbe that growyth on grounde,
  Nor no coresy may queth that qued,
Set *amor cum paciencia* in a littylle stound,
  For he wylle drey ham and make hame ded.
Lord, sende me sum *amor* sede,
  In my gardyn to rote and ryse,
Or ellys as seker as mene ote bred,
  I shalle never have lysens to lyve in ease.

Avaryssia ys a souking sore,
  He bladdyrth and byldeth alle in my boure;
He makyth me to swelle both flesshe and veyne,
  And kepith me low lyke a cochoure.
I have herde of an erbe to lyss that peyne,
  Mene seyth it bereth a doubylle floure,
Vigilate et orate, use welle they tweyne,
  That shalle help the of thy doloure;
As sekere as bred ys made of floure,
  Smelle theme in sesyne with thy nese,
The swetness of that savoure
  Shalle geve the lysens to lyve in ease.

Accidia ys a souking sore,
  He traveylyth me frome day to day,
And ever he wylle have more and more
  Plasters thane he purvey may.
I axst a mayster of fysyke lore,
  What wold hyme drye and dryve away;
Elymosina ys an erbe ther-fore,
  Oon of the best that ever I say.
Noynte heme therwyth ay whenne thow may,
  Thingk that *Requiem* shalle in the rente and sese,
And sone after, within a nyght and a day,
  Thou shalt have lysens to lyve in ease.

Gula ys a grevous galle,
  He bereveth my reste alle in my bed,

So sore I streyne my stomake withalle,
  Wyth many festys whene I am fulle fed;
I walow as worme doth in walle,
  I may nat trest tylle a schamely sched;
Mercy, Lorde, to the I calle,
  For us thou letteste thy breste be bled!
A leche hath layd hys hed to wed,
  To make a plaster, that wolde me please,
Off abstynaunce, and I it had
  Then sholde I have lysens to lyve in ease.

Luxiria ys a lyther mormale,
  Mercy, Lorde, fulle of pité;
Thou bringest my body in bitter bale,
  And fraille my sowle with thy frailté.
Sumtyme a surjoune tolde me a tale,
  This was the lessyne that he lerned me,
The rote of an erbe I sholde up hale,
  Men calle it Chastité and pounde it with peny-
    tencie,*
  Whene the ryb wode wylle on the rese,
Drayne it and dringke it with confescione,
  Thene shalt thow have lysens to lyve in ease.

Other erbys ther bene alsoo,
  That suffer the sores they may nat swelle;
Orys confescio ys on of thoo,
  He wylle nat suffre no ded flessche for to dwelle.
Cordys contrycio ys the too,
  A wasshyth the woundes as doth a welle.
Other ys *satisfactio* the sovereyne savetyff,
  For soth as I yow telle.
God that made both hevyn and helle,
  Geve us grace to serve and please,
In that worthy blys that we may dwelle,
  And gyff us alle lysens to lyve in ease!

* A line is here wanting. See the Sloane MS.

A LOVE SONG.

[From MS. Cantab. Ff. i. 6.]

Welcome be ye, my sovereine,
The cause of my joyfulle peine!
For the while ye were away,
Myn herte seyd noght but walaway.
No more I do my mirthis fayne,
But in gladnesse I swym and baine,
Ye have my mornyng dreven away!
Of your comyng I ame so fayne,
That mirthes done my sorow steine,
And make amonge theim suche a fray,
That reste may they with me no day.
Gladnesse ye have brought me againe!

Come home, dere herte; your tarieng
Kausith me to wepe, bothe weile and wring,
Also to lyve evere in distresse,
So gret there may no wight expresse!
Al my joye ye torne to mournyng.
Sorowe is in myne herte digging,
To dethe I trowe he woul me bring
In woful trans withoute redresse.
Whanne I have of you sume tiding,
Gret joye I have withoute failing,
Right as me ought with rightwisnesse;
But yet may not myne heveynesse
Departe frome me, til your comyng.

To you my joye and my wordly plesaunce,
I wol shrive me with dredful countenaunce,
Of thiding which your letter bereth wittenesse,

Therto constrained by my woful distresse,
Asking you absolucion and penaunce.
What wol ye more of me but repentaunce?
God wol himselve have therof suffisaunce,
Mercy I seke and aske aye foryevenesse.
By Seynt Martyne, and ye knew my grevaunce,
The whiche I suffrede with long continuance,
Dreding ye were of my woos roghtlesse,
That was to me a grevous hevinesse,
Yett aske I mercy to be in pacience!

There may areste me no pleasaince,
And our be our I fele grevaunce;
I note to whome I may complaine,
For he that may my woo restreine,
Wol have of me no remembrance.
Sith I ame under his governaunce,
He shuld sett me suche ordinaunce,
As I might have ease of my paine.
Me thinkith he might have conscience,
And of my woos sume suffisance,
Considering that I ame so plaine
To him ever with joye or paine,
Lett him have therof repentance.

NOTES.

P. 1, l. 1. *Colyn Blowbols Testament*. This curious satirical piece is taken from MS. Rawl. C. 86, in the Bodleian Library, a small folio volume which is fully described by Sir F. Madden in his Introduction to Syr Gawayne. It was written about the year 1508. The poem now printed is on a style and plan very similar to the Testament of Mr. Andro Kennedy, in Dunbar's Poems, vol. i. pp. 137-141.

P. 5, l. 33. *Southwerke*. A notorious place in old times for houses of ill-fame, and the rules and regulations by which it was governed are still preserved in a curious MS. of the fifteenth century in the Bodleian Library.

P. 10, l. 9. *Pyng, Drangoll*. A somewhat similar list of wines is given in the Squyr of Lowe Degré,—

> " Ye shall have rumney and malmesyne,
> Both ypocrasse, and vernage wyne,
> Mount rose and wyne of Greke,
> Both algrade, and respice eke,
> Antioche, and bastarde,
> Pyment, also, and garnarde;
> Wyne of Greke, and muscadell,
> Both claré, pyment, and Rochell.
> The reed your stomake to defye,
> And pottes of osey set you by."

P. 21, l. 1. *The Merchant and his Son*. Another poetical version of the same tale, the scene laid at Bristol, occurs in MS. Harl. 2382. It is in another and shorter kind of metre.

P. 21, l. 26. *Ageyn for ix. s. x*. The common old rate of interest with professed usurers, which was also the same as late as Shakespeare's time. The well known epitaph on Combe the miser, ascribed erroneously to our great poet, commences, " *Ten in the hundred* lies under this stone."

P. 23, l. 11. *An apersey.* That is, a person of unique merit. The phrase is not uncommon in early English.

P. 44, l. 17. *Elegy on Lobe.* This piece is written in a style very similar to some of Skelton's poems. See that author's Garland of Laurel. Douce, in his Illustrations, vol. ii. p. 313, mentions John of Low, the king of Scotland's fool; and I am not certain that we should not here read *Love*, the MS. being somewhat uncertain. I ought to add that in styling him fool to the "bluff king Harry," I am authorised by no other authority than the date of the MS. The mention of "the mad ladye Apylton" may perhaps decide the question.

P. 49, l. 17. *Robert of Sicily.* Other copies of this romance are in MS. Harl. 525; MS. Harl. 1701; MS. Coll. Caii Cantab. D. 16; MS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. 57. I am informed that one of these copies has been privately printed by Mr. Utterson, but have not had an opportunity of seeing it. This tale has been analysed by Warton and Ellis. According to Froissart, "Kyng Robert of Cicyle was a great astronomyre, and full of great science." See Ritson's Notes to Minot's Poems, p. 85. A play founded upon the same incidents was performed at the High Cross at Chester in the year 1529. In a contempory letter, printed by Mr. Collier, the following account is given of this performance:—

"Our moste humble duetye to your right honorable Lordshypp premysed, we holde it convenyent and proppre to infourme your good Lordshyppe of a play, which som of the companyes of this Cittye of Chester, at theyr costes and charges, are makynge redy, for that your good Lordshyppe maye see wether the same be in any wyse unfyttynge for them, as honest menne and duetyfull subjectes of his Majestye. The sayde playe is not newe at thys tyme, but hath bin bifore shewen, evyn as longe agoe as the reygne of his highnes most gratious father of blyssyd memorye, and yt was penned by a

godly clerke, merely for delectacion, and the teachynge of the people to love and feare God and his Majestye, and all those that bee in auctoryte. It is callyd Kynge Robart of Cicylye, the whiche was warned by an Aungell whiche went to Rome, and shewyd Kyng Robart all the powre of God, and what thynge yt was to be a pore man; and thanne, after sondrye wanderynges, ledde hym backe agayne to his kingdome of Cicylye, where he lyved and raygned many yeres."

P. 54, l. 14. *Assayer.* A taster in palaces, and the houses of the barons, to guard against poisoning. The term is here used with most bitter irony.

P. 54, l. 18. *As a fole schulde be schorne.* The custom of shaving fools, so as to give them in some measure the appearance of friars, is frequently noticed in the old romances. See Ellis's Met. Rom. iii. 146. So in the romance of Ipomydon, the hero is thus described as disguising himself as a fool,—

"Righte unsemely, on queynte manere,
He hym dight, as ye shall here.
A barbor he callyd, withouten more,
And shove hym bothe byhynd and before,
Queyntly endentyd, oute and in;
And also he shove halfe his chynne:
He semyd a fole, that queynte syre,
Bothe by hede and by atyre.
Armure he toke that was rusty,
And horsyd hym on an old rouncy;
An helme as blak as any panne;
A crokyd spere he toke hym than.
Whan that he was thus dight,
He semyd ylle a doghty knyght."

P. 64, l. 1. *Spiritual Remedies.* There is a later copy of this poem in MS. Sloane 747.

THE END.

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